

1915



# The MORNING WATCH.

EDITED BY  
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GREENOCK.

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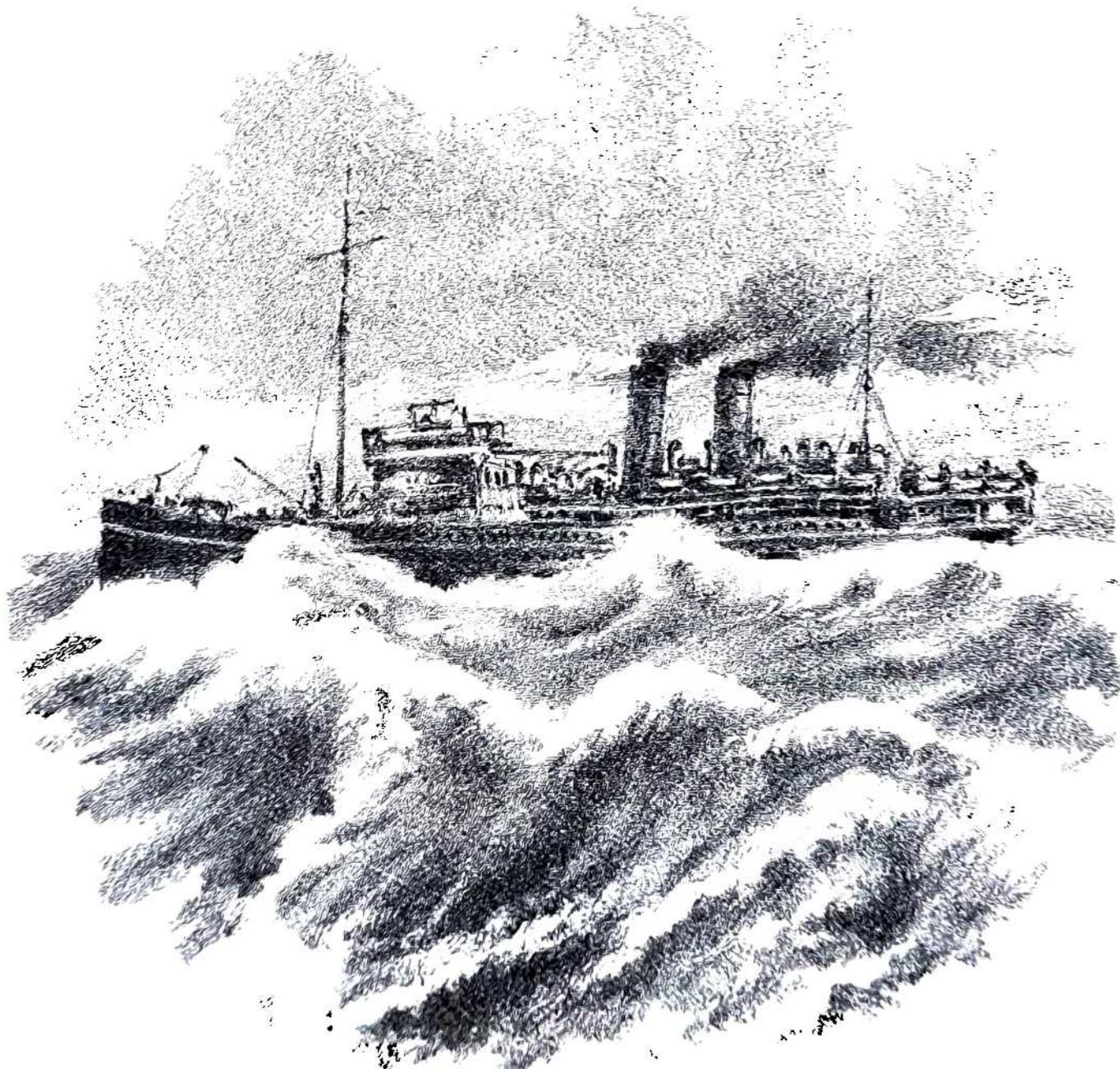
One Halfpenny.

# The Morning Watch.

VOL. 28.

*Edited by Rev. J. P. Struthers, M.A., Greenock.*

NO. 1.



*"The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice."—Psalm 93, 3.*

90th  
Birth-  
day.

was a beautiful silver bowl. I am told he thought at first, or pretended to think, of putting on it the words : "To my Mother, for her hen-bree" (that is brew), meaning thereby her favourite chicken-soup, but instead he caused to be engraved on it another text from the same Book, part of the Prayer of Agur—

1822—7th November—1912

"Give me neither poverty nor riches ;  
Feed me with food convenient for me."

The 26th October, 1890, the 90th birthday of Count Von Moltke, the great warrior who led Prussia against Austria in 1866 and against France in 1870, was celebrated all over Germany with extraordinary enthusiasm. Young and old, rich and poor, kept holiday. In the evening there was a banquet of the princes of Germany, at which he was hailed as one of the founders of their national greatness.

But perhaps the greatest honour of all was that which was paid him the evening before by the present Kaiser, who gave orders that the colours of all the regiments in Berlin, which were carried to the Imperial Palace every night, should be taken to the old General's house and placed in the ante-chamber of his bedroom. These colours, all tattered, torn by shot and shell, bleached by sun and wind and rain and snow, represented the history and the glory of the Empire. Every flag had been nailed to its pole by the King's own hand and the hands of the members of his family and his noblest counsellors and princes ; it bore the names of every battle-field on which the regiment had fought ; and some of the staves had silver rings on which were graven the names of men who had died with these colours in their hands. The sending of all these to that old man's house meant that they were as safe in his keeping as they could be anywhere.

Von Moltke, who was the uncle of the General who now bears his name, was a marvellous man. He was of few words, "silent in seven languages." He never knew defeat. "No," he said once—was it pride or humility, or both ?—"you must not compare me with Napoleon, for I never had to retrieve a disaster." "Next to a great defeat, a great victory is the biggest calamity that can beset a nation," he once said. Yet we know how he longed to lead an army in the field. "Once let me do that," he said, "and I care not how soon my old carcass be taken out of the way." And we know also that when he saw war with France was certain in 1870, his face and whole body looked as if in one hour he had become twenty years younger.

Many of us older folks liked him as the man who humbled the cruel power of Austria and delivered France from the rule of its Emperor and the evil influence of the Empress Eugenie—the woman whose friendship with Queen Victoria in later years has brought Britain so much harm and shame—but we can now see that the legacy he left his own land has not been for its good.

In a letter written from Berlin in July, 1870, he said, just as the war with France was beginning : "God's ways are not our ways,

90th  
Birth-  
day.

and in the evolution of the world He attains His ends even by lost campaigns." Let us pray with all our might that this year Germany herself may find it to be even so.

A Sir Robert Strickland, the original of one of the characters in *Tom Brown's School Days*—a book you should all read—who died in January, 1910, spent his 90th birthday in the hunting-field. One cannot help thinking he might have been better employed. There may be a time to hunt, but that time surely is not the day when one comes to be fourscore years and ten. And I hope you will all remember that!

There is a solemn description of a sportsman's life in one of Dr. A. K. H. Boyd of St. Andrews' Diaries : "One day a grand-looking man entered my study and sat down. He told me his name. It had been familiar all my life. 'I was born,' he said, 'to a great estate. I never have done the smallest good to anybody in my life. I have done nothing but amuse myself. And it has been hard work. I have broken this bone, and that bone, and that other'—and he indicated eight or nine of the chief bones of the human frame. Everybody knew he had been a mighty fox-hunter, and renowned in all sport. Then the stately old man (I thought him old, though he was only 59) said : 'I have everything that wealth can give me ; and I have made a poor thing of it.'"

*And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.—Exodus 17, 11.*

GOD took that way of letting men see with their very eyes the power of prayer. Moses' prayers were more than half the battle. No doubt many of the Israelites would ask jeeringly what good these three old men on the hill top were doing. When it was pointed out that the tide of victory rose and fell with the lifting up and letting down of Moses' arms, they would say at first that it was only a coincidence, and that it meant nothing. But when after a time they saw that the two things followed each other so often, so instantaneously, and so inevitably, they were forced to own that

it was not coincidence but cause and effect.

The lifting up of his hands meant many things. It was an appeal to God. It showed a desire to come nearer God, a willingness to receive Him and anything that came from His hands. It meant confession, thanksgiving, blessing. And the holding up of that famous rod recalled the wondrous mercies of the past, and expressed their hopes for the future. The God that had done so much was surely going to do more. He had brought them out of Egypt, not to let them die in the wilderness, but to bring them into a good land that lay far off. These old men's prayers meant that without God they could do nothing. And His answer to their prayers shewed that the Almighty does actually interfere in human things, though in

ways we cannot always follow. Mr. Müller of Bristol once said to a man that he found he sharpened his pencil best when he asked God to help him.

Don't imagine that Moses did nothing but pray. He did well in asking Joshua to conduct the fighting, for an old man should always give the young their opportunities of distinction, but there were lots of things to be done in preparing for the battle, and Moses would do all that a Commander-in-chief has to do.

Don't imagine either that it was a fine easy task he had when he went up the hill to pray. Praying, the right kind of praying, is hard, hard work.

When a boy has been a few days in a situation, and comes home some night wet and weary, he will sometimes say it is pretty hard that he should do all the work, running messages all day in the rain for 4/- a week, and his master sits in the office doing nothing and gets £800 a year for it. And if he has foolish friends they will say to him, "Oh, but that is what always happens! It is the working men who build the ship, and it is the masters who get the big salaries." They forget that it is the masters who prepare the estimates and draw up the plans and secure the material and keep things going and bear the responsibility of failure. The man who sits with a good coat on his back and clean hands, doing nothing but writing figures on a sheet of paper, is perhaps just

finding out that on this contract he is bound to lose £12,000.

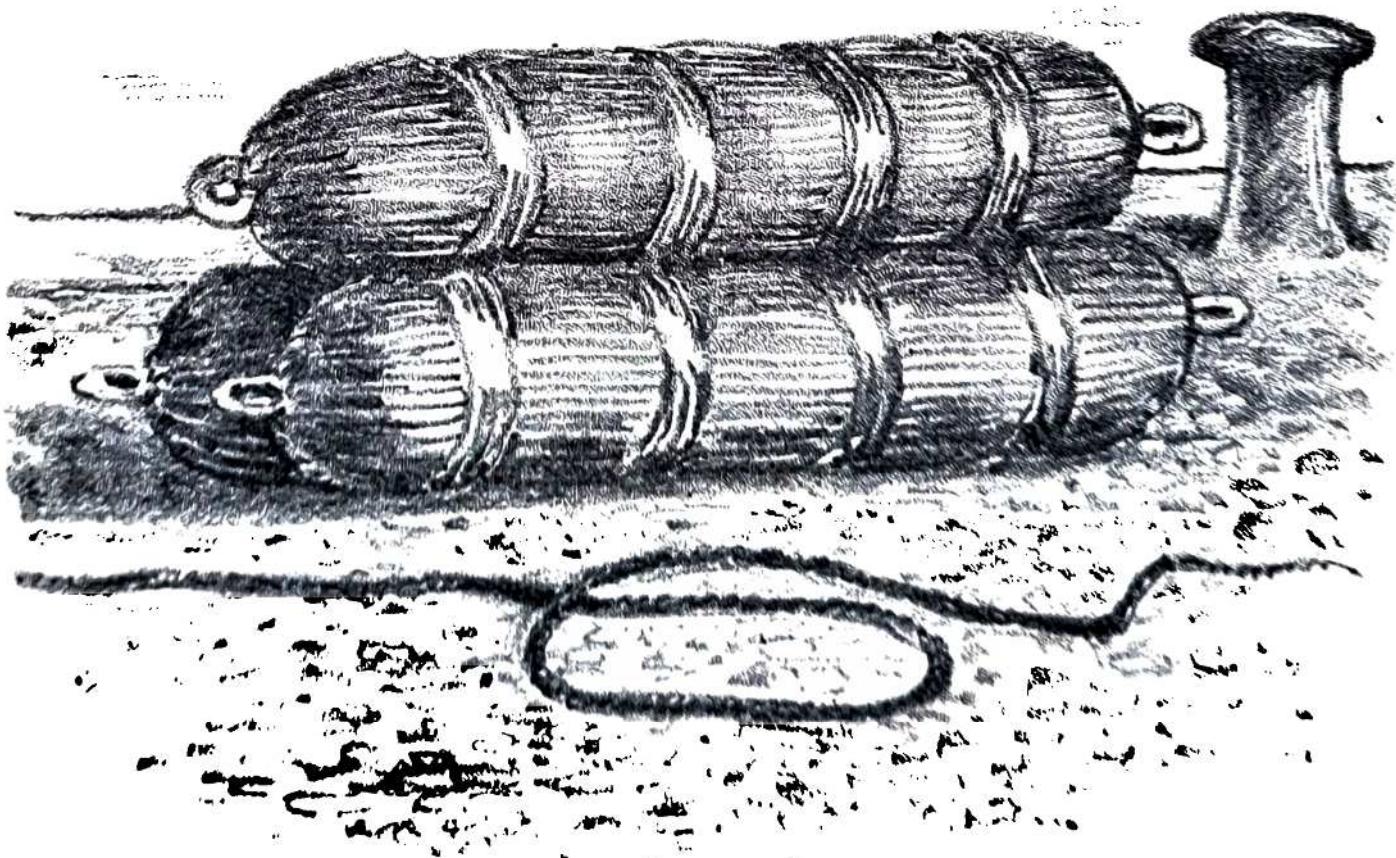
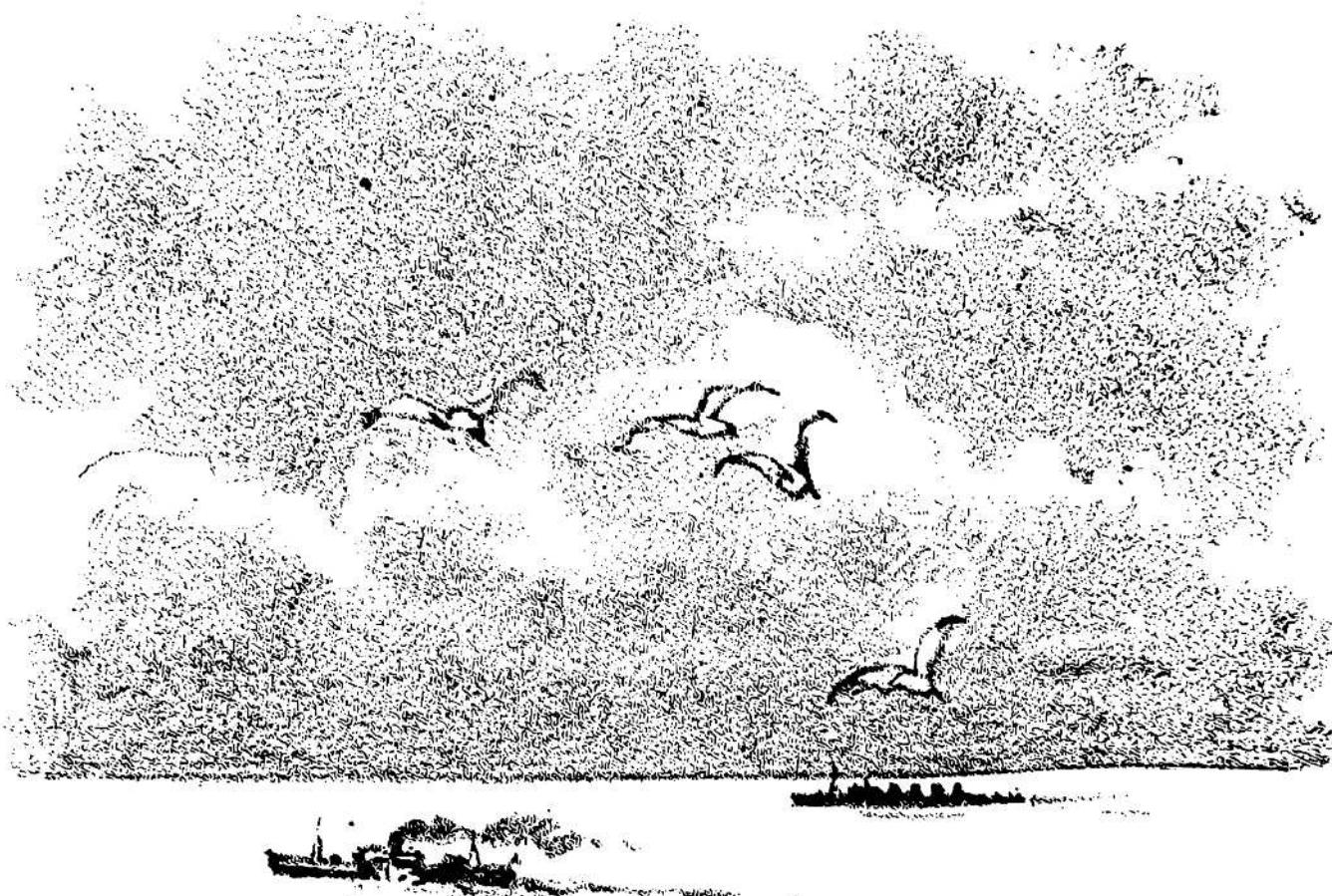
All that day Moses had to hold up his hands. If he let them down one moment some Israelite's blood would be upon his head. When therefore night came we may be sure he was a wearied man.

So also we know that when Christ prayed, He prayed with all His might. Sometimes His heart overflowed with joy, and sometimes He was *in an agony*. Though He has now a joy and happiness that are beyond all words, does He not still pray *in an agony*? Are we not told that the Holy Spirit Who is Christ's representative on earth prays for us *with groanings that cannot be uttered*? Just as a mother paces her room it may be for days on end carrying her ailing child in her arms, and tells us she is not a bit weary or sleepy, so we may say of our Lord in glory that though our sins and our sorrows grieve Him when He prays for us, if He feels no pain it is because His pain is swallowed up in love.

— :o: —

### The Fenders.

THESE three Fenders, and a lot more like them, were lying on one of our Greenock quays the other day, waiting to be shipped on board a man of-war. Fenders are used to keep ships from rubbing or grinding against one another or against a harbour wall. They were made of rope long ago, but rope is easily torn and frayed, and soon wears out. Next they tried a network of



rope with cork inside, but cork quickly splits up. Then coir—that is, the fibre of the cocoa-nut—was made use of, and did very well, but it soon gets out of shape. The fenders in the illustration are hazel rods, and are now esteemed the best. But they cost more than one would think. Indeed, if a friend were to offer any of you as a choice of New Year gifts either three fenders like those or a ten-pound note, it would pay you, though you won't believe it, to take the fenders. They cost more than that as it is, and they are getting dearer, for the hazel coppices are being cut down to make charcoal for the braziers in the trenches in France and Belgium.

Once upon a time, we read in *Æsop's Fables*, a man who was dying called his six sons to him and bade them each bring a thin faggot of wood. Then each was told to break his one in two, and this they all did easily. "Bring other six and bind them firmly together," and when this was done, "Try to break them now." And of course they couldn't.

#### MORAL :

Behold, how good a thing it is,  
And how becoming well,  
Together such as brethren are  
In unity to dwell.

Only that is not exactly the way *Æsop* put it, for he was a slave who lived in Asia about the time of Jeremiah, in the 6th century B.C., and whether he ever heard any of the Psalms or not, he certainly never saw the version of them made by Zachary Rous, the provost of Eton College, which we use in Scotland.

That is one of the lessons these fenders teach us: union is strength. Each fender is six feet long and over eighteen inches in diameter. It is made up of 1000 wands or withes, and bound together with 4 steel-wire bands, each band containing six ropes, each rope 6 strands, each strand 6 wires; that is, there are 1000 rods and over 800 wires, and they are all so compactly framed together as to become strong enough to bear the pressure of a mighty ironclad.

I wonder what the poor squirrels will say when they wake up now and again in the cold dark wintry days to eat a few nuts and acorns. Won't they miss some of the old landmarks in the thinned plantations and ask each other if the dull drumming in their ears could have been the noise of the woodmen with their axes and pruning-knives?

And what would they say if they were told that the thicker woods had gone to make fires to warm the soldiers to help them the more easily to kill one another? Would they not thank God for making them squirrels and giving them not a man's heart but a beast's?

It is from hazel-nuts that painters get the best of their drying oils, and doctors and druggists medicines for good old men's coughs.

It is of hazel wands that our household baskets are often made, and when God blesses our baskets and our stores, one of His reasons, perhaps, is that as little children carry them in their hands as they go for errands He can still see the

THE MORNING WATCH.

5



squirrels running and leaping and praising Him, and the birds singing to His glory, among the branches;

and for their sake, in some measure, He remembers us in the greatness of His love.

### Reasons for not going to Church. 17th Series.—No. 1.

*This brave lad and three others, all from Perthshire, were in the trenches one Sabbath night lately, for several hours, soaked to the skin, standing in stiff clay with four inches of water over it, and they had been getting a tongue-ing from an ill-natured sergeant, and worse than a tongue-ing from a young comrade half-mad with drink which he had managed to get hold of somehow, whom they were trying to keep quiet.*

*"And to think that this time last year," one of them said, "I refused to go to church because it was so draughty and the seats were so cold and hard."*

*"Yes," said the second, "and I wouldn't go because there were some proud, disagreeable people in it that wouldn't speak to me."*

*"Ay," said the third, "and I couldn't stand one of the old elders because every time he met me on the quiet country road he stopped me and prayed with me!"*

*The fourth is the lad in the picture, and he is now writing to his mother, and writing as cheerily as he can. He is telling her that while he can hardly say they feel as if they were in a clover field, for they have one or two discomforts now and then, he has ever so much to be thankful for, and he is especially glad she insisted on his taking his little sister's pocket Bible with him ; he often thinks of all she used to say to him, and sees now that she was right, and he and some other lads had been confessing to one another the other night that the one thing they were all gladdest of was this—that they had each a good mother who prayed for him night and day ; and they have got a new Colonel, a D.S.O. (Distinguished Service Order for bravery in the field), a very clever man and very careful of his men, and a really good man, and so is their Major.*



1	F	And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of many thunderings, saying, Alleluia :
2	S	For the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.— <i>Rev. 19, 6.</i> “This time of the winter troubles would seem one when, if ever, the strains of martial music might have had an unspeakable worth ; but—unless when now and then wafted towards them by a breeze from the French lines—it was long since any such sound had cheered the hearts of our people, our bandsmen having to attend the sick and the wounded.”— <i>Kinglake's Crimean War.</i>
3	S	Iniquities have overtaken me, I am not able to look up.— <i>Ps. 40, 12.</i>
4	M	Their faces toward the mercy-seat.— <i>Ex. 25, 20.</i>
5	TU	Escape for thy life ; look not behind thee.— <i>Gen. 19, 17.</i>
6	W	Let thine eyelids look straight before thee.— <i>Prov. 4, 25.</i>
7	TH	The Lord will go before you ;
8	F	The God of Israel will be your rearward.— <i>Is. 52, 12.</i>
9	S	Looking unto Jesus.— <i>Heb. 12, 2.</i> “We noticed the enemy continually looking back over their right shoulders as if they momentarily expected to see something appear from the south-east. Soldiers who look over their shoulders have ceased to be formidable, and soon the entire line began to retreat.”— <i>Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton's Scrap Book.</i>
10	S	Gabriel, being caused to fly swiftly.— <i>Dan. 9, 21.</i>
11	M	I say, Go, and he goeth.— <i>Matt. 8, 9.</i>
12	TU	I pray Thee, have me excused.— <i>Luke 14, 19.</i> “I have heard Lord Kitchener say to an officer : ‘Your reasons for not doing what you were told to do are the best I ever heard ; now go and do it !’”— <i>Sir Ian Hamilton.</i>
13	W	Go work, and he answered, I will not ;
14	TH	But afterward he repented himself, and went.— <i>Matt. 21, 29. R.V.</i>
15	F	Onesimus, aforesome unprofitable to thee,
16	S	But now profitable to thee and to me — <i>Philem. 11. R.V.</i>
17	S	The God of all the families of Israel.— <i>Jer. 31, 1.</i>
18	M	For Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned.— <i>Job 1, 5.</i> “ Ilka door-step has its ain slippery stane.”— <i>Fifeshire Proverb.</i>
19	TU	I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved.
20	W	Thou didst hide Thy face ; I was troubled.— <i>Ps. 30, 7.</i>
21	TH	Look therefore carefully how ye walk.— <i>Eph. 5, 15. R.V.</i>
22	F	My foot slippeth.— <i>Ps. 94, 18.</i>
23	S	The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in.— <i>Ps. 121, 8.</i>
24	S	My Father is the husbandman.— <i>John 15, 1.</i>
25	M	Ye are God's tilled land.— <i>1 Cor. 3, 9. R.V. margin.</i>
26	TU	Break up your fallow ground, sow not among thorns.— <i>Jer. 4, 3.</i>
27	W	They that plough iniquity and sow trouble, reap the same — <i>Job 4, 8. R.V.</i>
28	TH	Plough in hope.— <i>1 Cor. 9, 10</i> On the stone base of the pulpit in Little Bytham are cut the words “Orate et Arate” (3 syllables each), Pray and Plough.— <i>Highways, etc., in Lincolnshire: Rawnsley.</i>
29	F	A covenant between Me and the earth.— <i>Gen. 9, 13.</i>
30	S	Seed-time and harvest, summer and winter, shall not cease.— <i>Gen. 8, 22.</i>
31	S	I will declare THE DECREE : “ Thou art My Son.”— <i>Ps. 2, 7.</i>

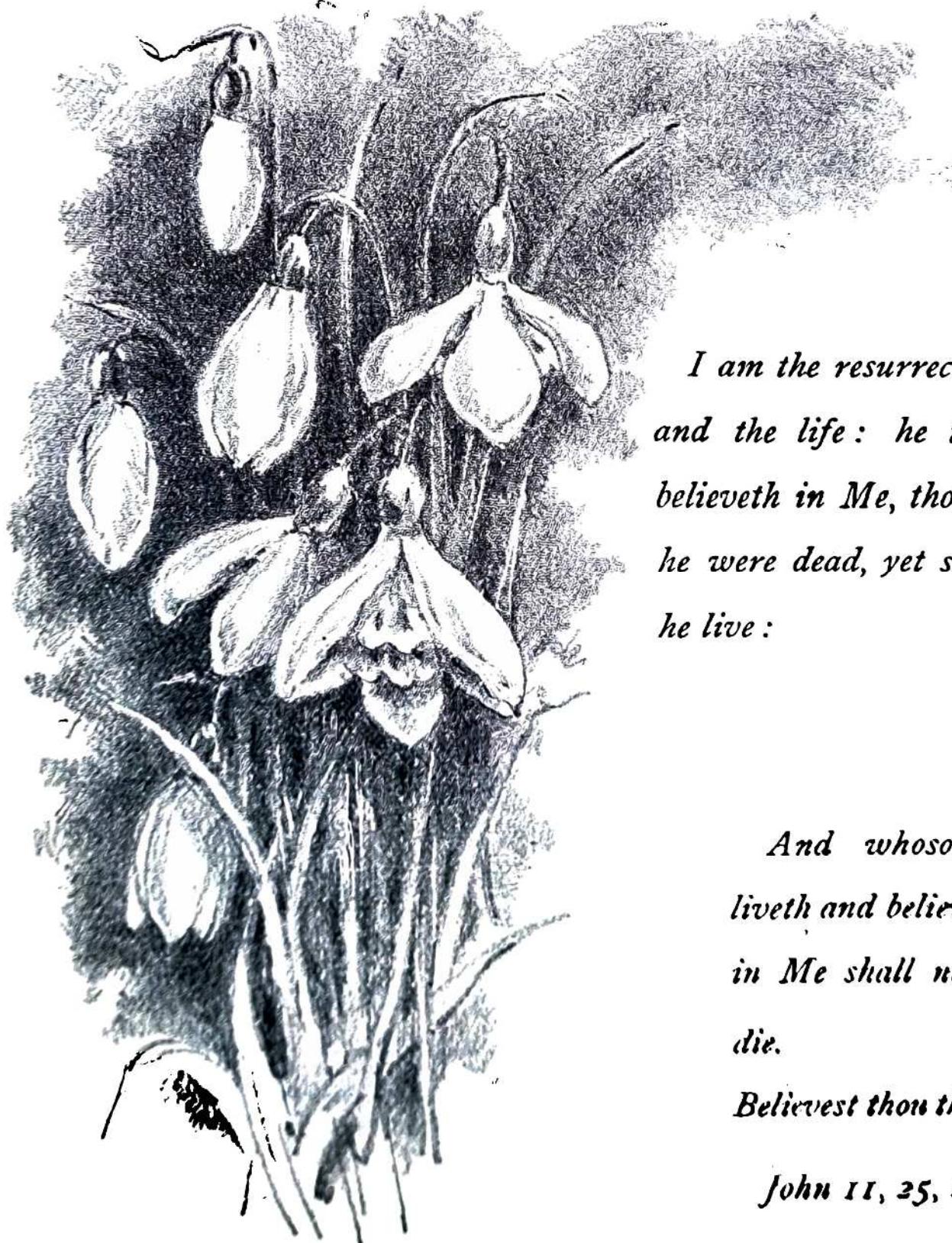
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# The Morning Watch.

VOL. 28.

NO. 2.



*I am the resurrection  
and the life: he that  
believeth in Me, though  
he were dead, yet shall  
he live:*

*And whosoever  
liveth and believeth  
in Me shall never  
die.*

*Believest thou this?*

*John 11, 25, 26.*

On Sabbath, January 17, while preaching his afternoon sermon in the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Greenock, Mr Struthers was seized by sudden illness, and before help could reach him he fell backwards in the pulpit unconscious. He was taken to his home, and returning consciousness gave hopes of recovery, but on the following morning his strength failed and very quietly he passed through the Valley of the Shadow of Death to the Life and Service beyond.

As many of its readers know, the "Morning Watch" has been written month by month for twenty-seven years by Mr Struthers. Had he been spared in health for another day, the number for February, 1915, humanly speaking, would have been completed by him. So far as is known the last page, containing a text for each day—one week's texts illustrating some incident or short saying, generally taken from the books Mr Struthers had been reading—had not been written. It has been thought best to issue this number with nothing added to what he had himself thought of or prepared. It is his last message to the readers whom he ever bore on his heart—a message of the Love of God, and God Himself will complete it.

It is hoped one other number of the "Morning Watch" may be issued, for which something will be written about Mr Struthers by friends who knew and loved him.

A. L. S.

## Concerning Birthdays.

(Continued from page 5.)

90th  
Birth-  
day.

Mr. Philpots, an English Church minister, Vicar of Berstead, wrote to his father, Archdeacon Philpots (father-in-law of Dr. Bradley, late Dean of Westminster), every single day of his later life. On his father's 90th birthday he sent these lines :

So lightly do you wear your years  
    You cause a sad confusion ;  
For you and I, it oft appears  
    Are topics of delusion.

“Pray, how’s your boy ?” folks not a few  
    Will stop me to inquire ;  
While just as many ask of you,  
    “ How goes it with your sire ! ”

Nor, till they peer with closer eyes,  
    Break into smiles, or else—apologize !

Few things please a father and mother more than the power to say, when you ask them when they last heard from their son or daughter — “We get a letter every week : every Tuesday, or Saturday, it comes as regularly as the clock. He has never missed a week since he left home.” The lad of whom that can be said has a lot of good about him, and is not far from the kingdom of heaven.

And if you say you are often kept so busy that you really can’t always find time, take a lesson from Mr. Delane, a famous Editor of the *Times*. No man surely can be busier or more often interrupted at the last moment than the Editor of a daily newspaper, and yet it is said that he either called on his mother or wrote her a letter *every day*.

90th

Mr. George Bancroft, an American statesman and diplomatist, 1800-1891, wrote in 6 vols. a complete *History of the United States*. On his 90th birthday, Oct. 3, 1890, Mr. R. C. Winthrop, an American orator, a descendant of the sixth generation from the famous and godly first Governor of Massachusetts, wrote to him : “ You have both written the History of your Country and made yourself a part of it.” These words, it has been said, could not have been addressed so truthfully to any other American. “ They summarise a unique career. The works and the life of Bancroft cover virtually the entire range of United States history.

When Bancroft was 84 he wrote to Oliver Wendell Holmes : “ You who are skilled beyond all others among us in the science of life know how terrible must be the weight of 84 years. Yet old age brings with it tranquillity ; I never fret myself because of evil doers.”

He used to set his watch very carefully, and would note, for example, “ that in 8 months and 14 days it had lost exactly 4 minutes, less than half-a-minute a month.”

90th  
Birth-  
day.

When he was 82 he still rose and kindled his own fire, and would work with close application fully 14 hours on end, that is, from 5 a.m. till 8 p.m., with but one short hour's interruption for breakfast and no repast otherwise, not even as much as a sip of water.

On the 14th of April, 1914, Mr. James Seligman, founder of an American banking firm, and the oldest living member of the New York Stock Exchange, celebrated his 90th birthday by exhibiting at his daughter's house a series of cinematographs of himself in his daily life. An operator had come to his house and "taken" him as he went about his work, walking in his grounds, writing at his table, talking with his friends. He himself, of course, knew the pictures were being taken, but his family did not.

What made him do that one cannot help asking. A good many years ago there lived in Greenock an old man over seventy, who went up two flights of stairs twice every week to get a "conjunct" view of himself in a 5-foot mirror in a tailor's workshop. They say vanity, pride of personal appearance, is one of the besetting sins of old men. Satan, "knowing that his time is short," seeks to have them that way, for such pride seems almost a virtue when we compare it with the slovenliness that some incline to, and at the worst it appears to be only an amusing harmless foible; yet there is no place for pride in the Kingdom of God.

But why should we always put the worst possible construction on what people do? Perhaps Mr. Seligman, in spite of his suspiciously-German-looking name, was a quiet modest man who simply wished to be kept in loving remembrance by his friends. Perhaps he wished them even to keep in mind that about every one of us there are "books" continually being written. Are these books only books in the memory of God and Angels and ourselves and on fellow-men? We know that Angels and men hereafter will have such powers of description and such a gift of apprehension as shall enable them to pourtray to others and to figure to themselves scenes and stories of human life with a vividness that meantime is impossible to our imperfect faculties of speech and hearing. But may they not be pictures for the eye as well? If men can make cinematographs and let us see ourselves and others in action, will Angels not be able to do far more? Are they not at least as clever as we are? In our foundries there are planing and other machines which, once set a-going, can go on and on without the presence of a man or any other supervision for hours and days together. By the use of very simple mechanism a barometer can register as well as take observations for months on end. So, possibly within the next few years even, men may learn to take and keep a continuous record of their lives. Perhaps there are such records of God's saints in heaven already, and hereafter, if by God's grace we get to that land where we shall know even as also we are known, we may be able as often as we wish to gaze at such scenes in the lives of all men as God Himself loves to think of. At least of this we may be sure,

we shall be able, somehow or other, to see and hear all that Christ did and said as plainly as if we had companied with Him all the time He went in and out among us, from the hour He was wrapped in swaddling bands and cradled in the manger unto that same day that He was taken up from us, and a cloud received Him out of our sight.

91st Birth-day.

Canon Grenside, a Church of England minister who died on Jan. 31, 1913, celebrated his 91st birthday in 1912 by going round his parish on horseback and visiting all his parishioners.

92nd

"March 16, 1879. My father's birthday, ninety-two years old. During dinner he was very bright and collected. At prayers and read Ps. 91, after which, he, sitting, prayed. . . . He said in his prayer (always till now so beautiful, powerful and simple) that he felt he could not pray, could not express what he wanted, but, 'Thou knowest better than we do what we need. Oh give us what we need.'"

The old man to whom these words refer was General Sir Duncan MacGregor, K.C.B. (For a very wonderful experience in his life see page 20, further on). He was for a time Lieut.-Colonel of the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders, which was perhaps the best behaved regiment there ever was in the British Army. Drunkenness and crime of every kind were absolutely unknown. There was no need for police-patrols or punishment cells. When it was stationed in Halifax, Nova Scotia, under Sir Duncan's command, every one of the soldiers used to march to church with his Bible and Psalm-book under his arm, and it is on record that, on one occasion, nearly 700 of them sat down together at the Lord's Table. Long afterwards when Sir Duncan was an old man and happened to be staying in Edinburgh he was greatly pleased when one of his successors in the command, Lieut.-Col. M'Bean, V.C., led the old regiment past his house one day.

He had two sons who brought him great honour: Douglas, a very godly lad who at the age of 19 was one of 160 volunteers who carried the ladders in front of the storming party in the assault on the Redan at the siege of Sebastopol in August, 1854. "He penetrated to the centre of the fort and was seen with his cap on the point of his sword, cheering on his men, when he was killed by a minie ball." The last thing he had done 15 months before when he left home to join his regiment at Windsor was to pray with his brother John, and the night before he was killed he wrote to his mother, saying, "You will not be absent from my thoughts in the coming strife, and if I fall I am certain we shall be reunited in glory everlasting." The other son, John, became famous all over Europe for his adventures in the *Rob Roy* Canoe. He too was a godly man and amid all the temptations of London life and London society remained a staunch Presbyterian and a valiant Protestant to the end of his days. He laboured much, too, among the poor, and gave all the money he made by his lectures—over £100,000—to religious and philanthropic institutions.

### A Coincidence.

*Thou tellest my wanderings : put  
Thou my tears into Thy bottle.—  
Psalm 56, 8.*

ON the 1st of March, 1825, the East Indiaman *Kent*, 1350 tons burden, bound for Bengal and China, took fire in the Bay of Biscay during a south-west gale. She had on board 364 men of the 31st Regiment, 109 women and children, 20 private passengers, and a crew of 148 : 641 souls in all.

The story of that dreadful day, and of the rescue almost at the last moment of all but 90 of her people by the brig *Cambria*, is told at full length in Mr. Edwin Hodder's most interesting book, *The Life of John MacGregor* (3rd edition, 1895).

One of the officers on board was Major, afterwards Sir Duncan MacGregor, K.C.B., of whom I have spoken on a previous page. With him were his wife, daughter of Sir William Dick, Bart., of Prestonfield, near Edinburgh, her sister Joanna, and his son John, then an infant 35 days old. When almost all hope had been abandoned Major MacGregor wrote this brief note to his father, and putting it in a bottle threw it into the sea : *The Ship the Kent Indiaman is on fire. Elizabeth, Joanna and myself commit our spirits into the hands of our blessed Redeemer. His grace enables us to be quite composed in the awful prospect of entering eternity. Dun. M'Gregor. Bay of Biscay.*"

About nineteen months afterwards, on Saturday, Sept. 30, 1827, a gentleman who was bathing on

the western shore of the Island of Barbadoes found the bottle floating, all encrusted with shells and seaweed, and had the pleasure shortly afterwards of handing the paper that was in it to its owner who had come out to the West Indies the year before to take command of the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders.

The chances against the happening of such a thing, a mathematician would say, could only be reckoned as millions of millions (and these are awful words) against one. Surely nothing but the Hand of Almighty God could have steered that tiny little ark through storm and calm, mid wind and wave and changing tides, over 3,000 miles, during five hundred and threescore and eighteen days and nights.

In 1856 the baby, now a man of over thirty, one day at Lanark met a sailor selling doggerel verses about the burning of the *Kent*, and told him he too had been on board the ship that famous day. "That you were not, sir," said the man looking at him, adding—"unless you were the baby I helped into the boat!"

One may be a little suspicious of the truth of the sailor's yarn—for seamen in all ages have cultivated their imaginations—but of the truth of the other story there still exists full evidence. Of it we can only say—"This is the Finger of God."

And if we observe and keep note of God's dealings with us ourselves, there is no one amongst us who shall not find his own life full of equally wonderful things. For God is not only not far from any one of us, but He loves to make His presence felt.

The ship the "Kent"  
Is burning in our  
fire Elizabeth  
Joanna & myself  
Commit our spirits  
into the hands of our  
Blessed Redeemer

his grace enables  
us to be quiet

Composed in the awful  
prospect of entering  
eternity — J. H. Green

1<sup>st</sup> March 1825

Bay of Biscay

Copy of the letter written on the burning "Kent".



The portrait of Captain Hedley Vicars and the sketch of his grave, which were drawn before Mr. Struthers' death and at his suggestion, had been approved by him ; therefore they take their place in this number of the "Morning Watch." He had said he was going to write something about that brave young soldier, who was shot while leading his men to victory against a body of Russians, but no manuscript has been found. He had lately referred when preaching to the Memoirs of Hedley Vicars, and said that his letters home from the Crimea telling of the work in the freezing trenches, of the thick mud and pouring rain, and thanking friends for warm clothing, and most of all for Testaments, "read like a paragraph out of yesterday's newspaper."

Doubtless our own circumstance of war, and the writing of the paragraph on General Duncan MacGregor's 92nd birthday, also the article, "A Coincidence," on a previous page, had suggested some thoughts to Mr. Struthers, for Douglas MacGregor—"my darling, fair-haired, sunshiny boy, Douglas," as his father called him—and Hedley Vicars were close friends. Both were fearless and brave in fighting for their country, and both were good soldiers of the Cross of Christ.

In writing to his mother after seeing Captain Vicars' noble frame lying dead in the hospital tent, young MacGregor says: "The most gallant, the most cheerful, the happiest, the most universally respected officer, and the most consistent Christian soldier, has been taken from us. I know not how to live without him."

Six months later he, too, had met a soldier's death, and the friends were reunited.

A. L. S.



*Grave of Hedley Vicars  
at Scutari.*

## The Three Comforters.

*The Flowers appear on the earth.—Song of Solomon 2, 12.*

---

'Twas winter, and I stood and sobbed,  
For fears oppressed me so ;  
I was like him thieves beat and robbed  
Half way to Jericho ;

When lo ! three snowdrops I espied,  
Fragile and pure and sweet ;  
They beckoned from the other side,  
And stooped and kissed my feet.

Ye were not comforters like Job's,  
Your words were God's, not man's,  
Brave priests, pure Levites in white robes,  
Three good Samaritans.

Ye turned my darkness into day,  
Poured out hope's healing balm,  
Sent me uplifted on my way  
Singing a merry Psalm.

Two hundred pence would not suffice  
For that ye did this day ;  
My Host will reckon up the price,  
My Lord Himself will pay.



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### Reasons for not going to Church. 17th Series.—No. 2.

*These soldier lads at the Front were never absent from church when at home. One of them is reading the Gospel his mother put into his kit when she parted from him. They have been praying, wondering if the folks in the home-land are praying for them, and hoping they are, for they feel as never before how good it is to pray.*

*They have a reason for not going to church to-day.*

---

*WATCH YE THEREFORE: FOR YE  
KNOW NOT WHEN THE MASTER OF  
THE HOUSE COMETH, AT EVEN, OR AT  
MIDNIGHT, OR AT THE COCKCROWING,  
OR IN THE MORNING:*

*LEST COMING SUDDENLY HE FIND  
YOU SLEEPING.*

*AND WHAT I SAY UNTO YOU I SAY  
UNTO ALL, WATCH.*

*Mark 13, 35, 36, 37.*

MARCH. 1915.

DOUBLE NUMBER.

ONE PENNY.

# The Morning Watch.

VOL. 28.

In Memoriam Number.

No. 3.



Yours affectionately.

J.P. Struthers.

## A Biographical Note by the Rev. A. C. Gregg, B.D.

*Far off thou art, but ever nigh ;  
 I have thee still, and I rejoice ;  
 I prosper, circled with thy voice ;  
 I shall not lose thee tho' I die.*

\* \* \* \* \*

*That friend of mine who lives in God,  
 That God which ever lives and loves.*

—Tennyson—“In Memoriam.”

MRS. STRUTHERS has asked me to write something about Mr. Struthers, with a short biographical note, for this final number of the *Morning Watch*, and I do so, feeling at the same time that if anyone wants really to know the life of Mr. Struthers the best place to get the knowledge is in the pages of the twenty-seven volumes of the little magazine which he wrote out of his very heart and soul. There he has told us all his heart.

Mr. Struthers was a Glasgow man, having been born, brought up, and educated in that city. From his very birth, which took place on the 8th of April, 1851, he had been dedicated by his parents to the ministry of the Gospel. That dedication the child solemnly accepted for himself as soon as it was made known to him, and though in after life, with deep humility, he sometimes felt misgivings, he never swerved from the path of his holy calling. The manner of the home life of his early years may be gathered from what has been written of it by the Rev. James Paterson, of Thurso, who knew him from his boyhood: “He was nurtured in the atmosphere of prayer. In addition to family worship morning and evening, both his father and mother prayed with him apart. They had begun to carry him to the sanctuary while he was still a very young child.” At the High School and University of Glasgow he won many an honour, including two gold medals and two silver medals, and graduated M.A. in 1873.

Mr. Andrew S. Currie, now of London, who was John Struthers' most intimate schoolfellow, has stated that the prizes he gained were chiefly valued for the happiness they gave his mother. Mr. Struthers never spoke of his academic successes. No one ever saw those four medals; and not long ago he disposed of them in a characteristic fashion by sending them to Mr. Murray, of the National Bible Society of Scotland, to be sold for the benefit of the Society's funds, the money to be entered as coming from "An Old Man's Medals." Mr. Murray, however, retained the medals, paid their money value to the Bible Society, and, the day after Mr. Struthers' death, with touching kindness, sent the medals to Mrs. Struthers, saying he thought she would prize them more than ever.

Mr. Struthers was deeply and unaffectedly religious from his youth up. As schoolboy and student, he prayed for mental power and faculty to overcome the difficulties of his studies. To intellectual capacity of the first order he added untiring industry as a duty he owed to God. Of sturdy and well-knit frame, he enjoyed magnificent health, and loved athletic exercises, especially the game of cricket, which to the end of his life ever stirred him to keen interest and admiration.

His father and mother had belonged to the Original Secession Church, but about 1865 joined the Communion of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, when their son, being but thirteen or fourteen years old, accompanied them to the Lord's Table for his first time. At this period he told the school companion already named what a joy the half-yearly Communion Service was to him.

As a Divinity student Mr. Struthers attended the Theological Hall of Glasgow University and the Free Church College, Glasgow. At the former he won Dr. John Caird's Special Prize for Sermon Composition. On 8th May, 1876, he was licensed to preach by the Reformed Presbyteries, and on 1st October, 1878, he was ordained by them to the pastorate of the little congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church at Whithorn, Wigtownshire. There he spent only three years, and then he came to Greenock, where he was to

labour for thirty-three years. His induction in Greenock took place on 25th January, 1882, and he died on 18th January, 1915, having given his whole energy, his anxious thought, his heart's love, and his earnest prayers for the highest good of his beloved and loving congregation, for every good cause in his town, and for God's Kingdom the wide world over.

Before being ordained to the ministry, Mr Struthers had travelled round the world with young companions whose tutor he had been. I have often heard him speak of the delights, the dangers, and the wonders of that tour. Travel in foreign lands dulls the edge of religion in some men, but Mr Struthers seemed to find wherever he went, from land to land and from sea to sea, the presence and the beauty of the Lord.

It was in the pulpit that Mr Struthers' genius and spirituality shone most brightly. As a preacher he was no man's follower. The style and language of the schools were foreign to him. He struck out a line for himself. In creed he was a firm Calvinist, and was remarkably fond of the *Shorter Catechism*, on which he had once hoped to write a book, with anecdotes and pictures. But his sermons were not cast in the theological mould. The doctrine which seized and held his heart and filled his mouth was the Love of God for sinners. This was the regulative principle of his beliefs. The Bible, in every part, was his mine and he sank his shaft deep. He thought concretely and chose live subjects, or, rather, made every subject live which he chose. He was a seer, literally a see-er. He saw with his own eyes, and what he saw he had the rare faculty of telling in the purest Saxon, clear as a sunbeam, while his voice, rich and unforgettable, was one that could vibrate with tenderness or with indignation.

No notice of Mr Struthers' life interests would be proper if it took no account of the building of the beautiful church in which his congregation now worship. He had two ambitions about it: first, that there should be no begging for it, and second, that it should be free of debt when opened. His people vigorously seconded him in

his aims, and having contributed generously to the building fund for many years before a stone was laid, they enabled their minister to achieve his purpose.

No man ever presented a more hospitable mind to all the Churches of the Evangelical faith than Mr. Struthers. He could not tolerate the spirit of denominational pride. He spared no arrows in his warfare against Rome as a persecuting and dangerous Church, and he hated ritualism and sacerdotalism, but every Church that stood for Free Grace was to him dear and honourable. Yet his whole heart went out to the Covenanters of Scotland, and nothing could tempt him aside from following them in their grand ideal—first, of a personal bargain with God for salvation ; and, next, of a national compact in which Jesus Christ would be made Lord and King.

Mrs. Struthers has written on another page about the *Morning Watch*, and I will not add to her words, except to say, as I think it should be said in this final issue of the magazine, that the Editor always maintained that the *Morning Watch* could not have been produced without "the lady who drew the illustrations." From its very beginning he had the incomparable help of Miss Macdonald, and when eight years ago she became his wife, their joint interest in the little magazine was only deepened and strengthened. Their happiness in each other's work for it, and their unity of aim and method in conducting it for the Love of God, were of a piece with the perfect bond which united them in marriage and which was to each a priceless benediction of God.

Mr Struthers was a man of sympathy, from whom many received help and blessing. I have before me a letter in which a lady tells how he comforted her concerning her husband, whose health had broken down, leaving his mental vision overshadowed. The lady had been in an agony of doubt about her husband's previous life and relation to God, and Mr Struthers said to her : "The failing may be limited in its operation. The Creator of the brain can easily reserve a cloudless compartment for Himself wherein He can hold communion with His child. 'It is He that hath made us

and not we ourselves.' " This kind and happy thought gave much relief to that lady's mind.

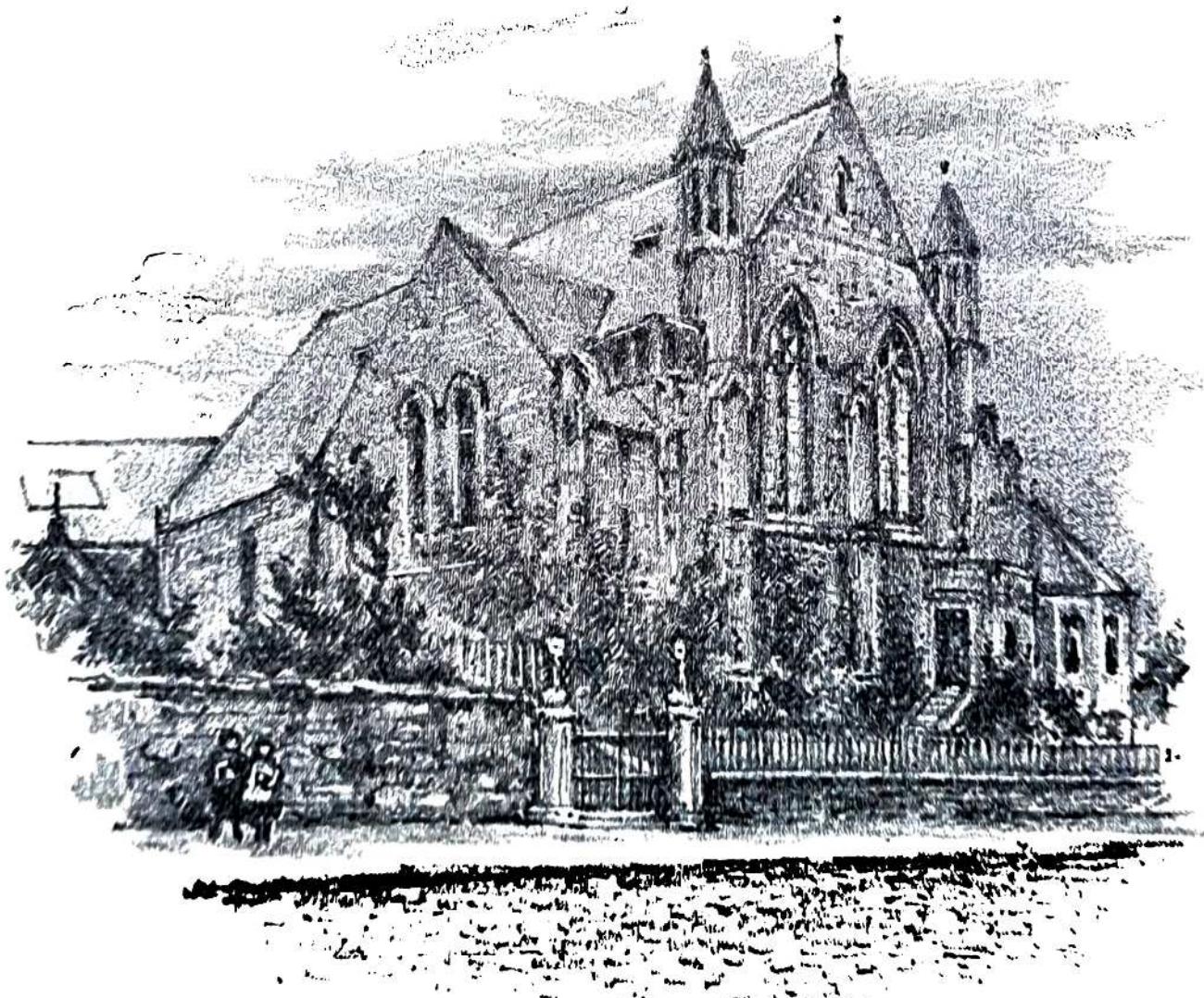
The War lay heavy on Mr Struthers' heart. From the beginning of it he seemed never to find release from the sorrow and the burden of it. When I stayed in his house some days a few months ago, I noticed that he never could ask a blessing at the table without praying for our soldiers and sailors ; so big and tender was his heart, and so fervent his patriotism.

A great part of Mr Struthers' goodness lay in his ungrudging efforts to cheer the sick, the lonely, the distressed, and the unfortunate. And the need of the heathen world ever wrought on his compassion. I never knew any man whose heart so burned with zeal for the missionary cause. He thought the missionary of Christ to be in the most honourable post which a human being could occupy. He revered the true missionary. He would have done anything in his power to encourage him or help him. And all services ancillary to mission work were in Mr Struthers' view tinged with a glow from heaven. To build a mission ship ; to be a carpenter at a mission station ; to write an article about a missionary ; above all, to translate even one verse like John iii. 15 into any heathen tongue in which the Gospel had never before been spoken—these were actions which he thought angels might well covet to perform. Nor was the missionary enterprise with him a mere matter for burning speech or enthusiastic admiration. He never invited anyone to do a duty which he had not begun to perform himself. His liberality towards foreign missions and Bible societies was exceedingly abundant and constant at that. People often stood amazed when they heard of Mr Struthers' generosity to these causes. He would economise in every other direction, but never in the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

Mr Struthers was to his Church an ornament and a tower of strength. His beautiful life was a joy and stimulus to his associates. But we must not grudge him his crown. He lived for Christ, and he now lives with Christ. Happy they who follow him who through his faith and his patience now inherits the promises.

The thousands of readers of the *Morning Watch*, young and old, feel that by the death of its Editor, a man greatly beloved, they have lost a guiding and a cheering light, which they had accustomed themselves to look for month by month. The "little book," of which it may be truly said that he "took it out of the hand of The Angel," even Christ, is now sealed up, and Mr. Struthers is to write for us no more. Yet to the very last his mind had been revolving new and gracious messages for his readers. If he could send just one word more it would, I think, be such as this : "*I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee : but I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face.*"

Even so. Amen.



Reformed Presbyterian Church.  
Greenock.

## Mr Struthers and the Bible.

By Professor James Denney, D.D.

THE genius and goodness of Mr Struthers impressed every one who came into even casual contact with him. I have never known a man who had so deep a sense of the love of God, or who so unmistakably had the love of God abiding in him. Scottish Christianity has sometimes been reproached for want of tenderness, as if it worshipped some other God than the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ; but whoever may have deserved this reproach, he did not. He knew the Father, and he helped many to know Him. It was this which gave their peculiar charm and virtue both to his preaching and his prayers. Whether he was speaking to men for God, or speaking to God for men, you felt it. There was something in all his utterance which was not only simple but searching, tender, and profound. The gaiety and humour which made his conversation so fascinating never jarred with this ; they were perfectly natural, but they were the light playing on the surface of a great deep. I have never known a man in whom self-denial was so perfected. He never thought of himself if there were others to think of, and he never counted any time wasted that was spent in doing good. The good that he did, too, was not the good which attracted him ; it was just the good that was there, waiting and needing to be done. No drudgery it involved was too trivial or too thankless ; he went through it with fidelity as scrupulous as if it had been the most honourable work in the world.

But through all his genius and goodness I believe most people would have been struck by his extraordinary love for the Bible. It came out even in his manner of reading it. Some men read the Bible aloud as if they had written it, or as if it had been written only for others to whom they were announcing it, but Mr Struthers read like a man listening for a voice which he knew and would recognise, and not only listening for that voice but continually hearing it, with a solemn awe and gladness which communicated itself to all who

heard him. Perhaps we have sometimes wondered how men could read the Bible habitually yet never strike a Bible key in their own speech. No one ever had this disappointment in listening to Mr Struthers. He spoke in his own language, and with all its simplicity it never failed to be in tune with the truth, the dignity, and the pathos of the inspired Word.

One of the striking features of his love for the Bible was its impartiality. I do not mean that he had no favourite passages in it, but that he loved it all. He loved the books which are often neglected, and in which the ordinary reader finds little. He caught the voice of the Father, and was glad, in what to others seemed dreary and uninteresting passages. If a friend happened to call, he would make him read over his next prayer meeting chapter, and say anything which occurred to him about it—an experiment much more rewarding to the friend than to himself. He loved to hear what bits of the Bible had impressed others. He loved especially to have mention made of what he called "bonnie" texts. And he preferred them short.

Some of the earliest and latest recollections I have of him illustrate his attitude to the Bible. The book of Genesis, as is well known, tells of two occasions on which Abraham denied his wife. Some one long ago mentioned in Mr Struthers' presence the theory that these are just divergent versions of the same story : no one, it was argued, would do such a thing twice, especially after coming out of it so shabbily. "No," said Mr Struthers, "that is exactly what he would do. A man always goes and repeats the same wickedness or folly ; there is nothing in which we are less original than our sins." On the last occasion on which I heard him preach his text was Deuteronomy xxii. 3 : "Thou mayest not hide thyself." He spoke of the humane law which required the Israelites not to pretend ignorance of what they knew to save themselves the trouble of helping a brother ; they were not to turn down the next street as if they had not seen the ox or the ass which had fallen by the way and needed a friendly hand to raise them. Then he introduced one of his favourite ideas, that God imposes no law on us which He does

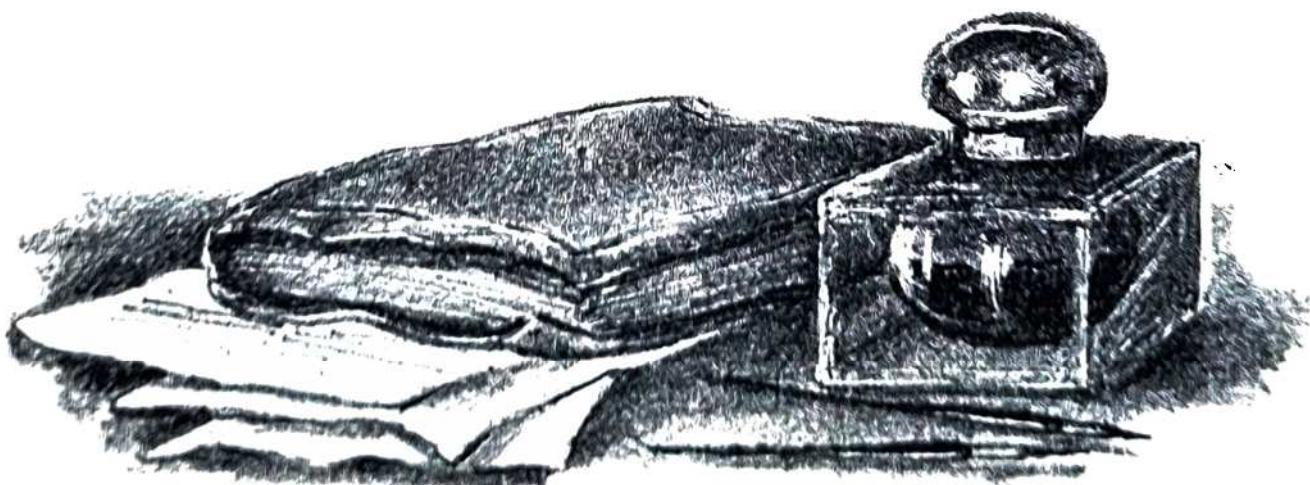
not Himself observe ; so that when He says to us, Thou shalt not hide thyself from thy brother's trouble, He gives us the right to say to Him, Thou shalt not hide Thyself from us in the troubles which are too hard for us. "Thou shalt surely help." The love of God seemed to flood his heart as he spoke, and the inspiration of the text burned again in his words. It would be inept to call him eloquent—one might as well say the Bible was eloquent—but his word was with power.

Nothing gives a more vivid idea of Mr Struthers' mastery in the Bible than the last page of *The Morning Watch*. I was one of many who read the *Watch* eagerly from beginning to end, but I usually began at the end. The choice, combination, and illustration of the texts was wonderful. Mr Struthers was a great reader of biography, and a great and sympathetic observer of life, and everything in his reading and experience was at once illuminated by the Bible and threw light upon it. Heroic stories especially appealed to him. I heard him say once that he had read through the life of Lord Lawrence six times. But everything real touched him, all that men and women and children had actually done or said or suffered, and for everything real he found a point of contact in the Bible. A banker pointed out to me the other day his happy illustration of the text, "Begin not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father." "If a Bank or Insurance Company takes over a business, any consideration for the 'Good Will' is immediately written off." This quotation from *Stocks and Shares* by Hartley Withers is one of a thousand. Sometimes they make us smile and sometimes bring tears into our eyes, but always they confirm us in our faith that the Word of God is the book for all mankind.

It is not wrong to say that the Bible inspired Mr Struthers' antagonisms as well as his love. There is a great deal of scorn in the Bible, especially for the unreal things which exalt themselves against God, and he shared it. He was never a man to be carried away with a cry. There were moods in which he found it congenial to read, "Pharaoh, King of Egypt, is but a noise," or his last text at

the Synod, "Your memorable sayings are proverbs of ashes." And he had learned from Jesus to hate with an intensity of hatred, only equalled by the intensity of his love for God, the things which do wrong to men, who are the children of God. Chief among these things were the trade in strong drink and the corruption of the Christian religion by the Church of Rome. No one entered with purer and more unselfish passion into the indignation of Jesus when He said, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

It was part of Mr Struthers' love of the Bible that he honoured above all men those who helped to make it known. The Bible Society had no warmer or more generous friend. If he envied anybody in the world, it was the missionary who first translated any part of the Bible into a new language. He would count up the languages in which it was still unknown, and the number of men who might yet win this brightest of crowns. He himself was before everything a minister of the Word. He was taken away from us in the very exercise of his ministry. His death was like the sudden going out of a bright light, but nothing could have been more in keeping with his whole life than that he should have been parted from us saying "God gave." He dwelt in love and so dwelt in God, and now he is at home with his Lord.



## Appreciation by Rev. Alexander Smellie, D.D.

*"Very pleasant hast thou been unto me."*

IT is thirty-five years, this month of March, since I met Mr. Struthers first, and I remember still some of the things he said then. That was always the way with him, as each of his friends will testify. He nothing common *said*, or mean ; and the scene never failed to be memorable if he was in it. There was such strength in his talk, joined with such consideration and kindness ; such a play of rippling and irrepressible humour, and yet such seriousness and gravity ; such continual reverence, and, side by side with the reverence, such familiarity and homeliness even when he was speaking of what is holiest and highest. He saw the most usual things from quite unusual angles. He astonished and delighted you by the quaint and suggestive and radiant light he threw on every topic. I have known only one other whose ordinary conversation was as individual and fresh, Dr. John Ker ; and there were qualities in Mr. Struthers's *obiter dicta*—an unexpectedness, a surprise—which Dr. Ker's did not possess in the same degree. But I would not make comparisons ; I have no happier and no more sacred recollections than those which gather round these two men of genius and men of God.

The same note of originality marked everything he did. The shortest letter he wrote was, in a peculiar sense, signed with his own autograph ; I cannot imagine his friends parting willingly with so much as a post-card which he sent them. And his lectures—not only the famous later ones on "Coincidences" and "The Humour of the Bible" and "A Week-End One Hundred Years Ago," but older ones on "China" and "Character in Handwriting" and "Napoleon III."—nobody but Mr. Struthers could have conceived and could have delivered them. If he told you about what he had seen and heard in China, it was to prove that all the oddities of the Chinaman might be discovered in your next-door neighbour, and, far more probably, in yourself. Or, if he chose the Third Napoleon

for his theme, it was that he might preach a tremendously solemn sermon about the hollowness and hypocrisy which are to be found elsewhere than in the Second Empire. To many who never saw him in the flesh, *The Morning Watch* has made him a dear and honoured teacher ; and was there ever a magazine like *The Morning Watch*? Whether one commenced with the picture and its legend on the front page, or, as some of us preferred to do, with those wonderfully grouped texts and their illuminating illustrations on the last page, it was invested month after month, as Bengel says of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, with "a certain unmixed sweetness." I had rather be owner of its twenty-seven volumes than have all the Elzevirs and Kelmscotts in the world. We understand why *The Morning Watch* must cease with its author's death ; it is too indelibly stamped with his image and superscription.

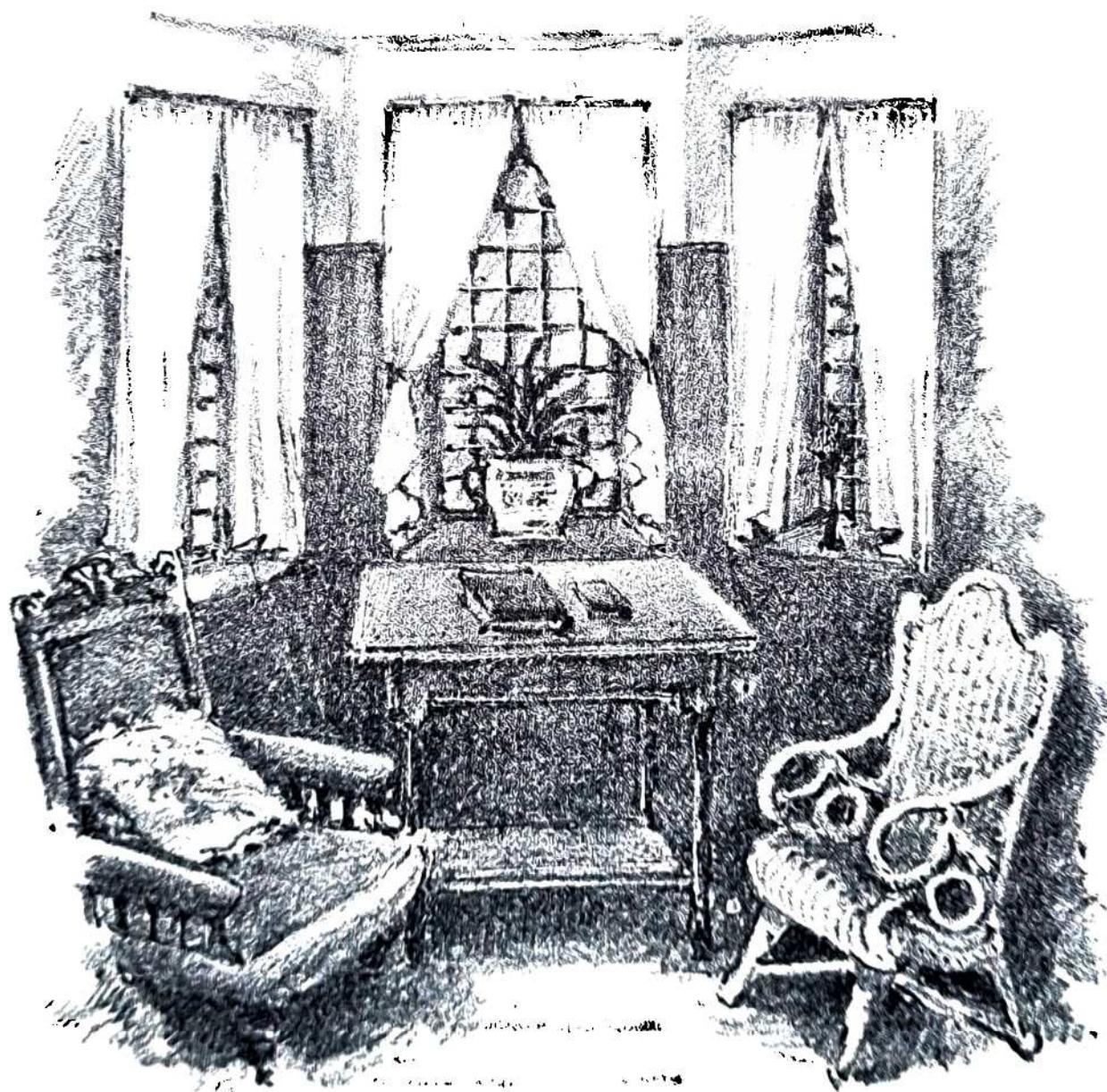
Mr. Struthers could be very severe. If he had to rebuke anything false or cruel or wicked, his anger was terrible. I am certain that, with all his fun and laughter, there was a great deal of melancholy in his nature. Though it must be thirty winters since I listened to it, I can recall how he closed that lecture on China to which I have referred. He was describing the steamer putting out from the harbour—Shanghai or Yokohama—and the sailor taking his soundings with the lead in the rapidly-deepening waters, and calling out at intervals the various results of the operation : "Ten fathoms," and "Twenty fathoms," and "Thirty fathoms," and, by-and-by, "In the deep sea." "And I think," Mr. Struthers added, and it was his last word : "I think I have been in the deep sea ever since." He was extraordinarily tender, and unselfish and generous, and hopeful for other people, even the most disappointing and feckless. What a real pleasure he had in praising his friends, crowning them with the garlands he would never accept for himself! How much he gave away, of his money, his time, his thought and labour, his heart's love! What an ungrudging service it was his habit to render to the unfortunate, and those who had fallen, and those who tired out the patience of almost everybody else! And you never heard a word about it from his own lips. In truth, he dealt most unsparingly with

himself. One of his reasons for setting great store on Mr. Barrie's books (I think he scarcely cared to call him by his newer and lordlier title)—“Mr. Barrie, than whom,” he said, “I know no truer living discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, no sterner surgeon of the soul”—was that in Sentimental Tommy he saw incarnated and personified a danger of the spirit against which, he protested, he had constantly to be on his guard. Our Moses of the Mount would not allow that his face shone.

God was First and Last with him. He was a great preacher, partly because of that remarkable originality of which I have spoken, and which never forsook him, but still more because he had an unconcealed and unending gladness in proclaiming the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. The text of his first sermon in Greenock was “God is Love ;” it was the keynote of his ministry ; and it was singularly fitting that He, of Whom he said so many true and winning things, should summon him from the pulpit home to Himself when he was speaking on the words, “God giveth liberally.” I have been looking again at twelve papers he contributed, seventeen years since, to a little magazine with which then I had something to do. “Flowers in the Crannied Wall” he names the series, because the subjects were chosen from what some might think the rougher and less promising portions of the Old Testament. “The Creditor to be kept outside the Door,” “The Debtor’s Garment,” “The Living polluted by the Dead,” “A Mouthful for the Threshing Ox,” “The Old Prophet in Bethel,” “The Salt of the Covenant of thy God,” “The Staves of the Ark”—these are among the headlines. And the recurring lesson to which the papers are perpetually coming back is the lesson of the amazing, many-coloured, immeasurable, unconquerable love of God. “God gives us another cord by which we may bind Him Himself ;” “God does not deal in halves ;” “God gave His Only Begotten Son for us from all eternity ;” “God meant, if I may say so with reverence, almost to catch His people with guile, and entrap them into a covenant never to be forgotten ;” “No man, in God’s service, is left to plough the barren sands”—these are sentences in which those who were

intimate with him can hear the very accent and emphasis of Mr. Struthers's voice.

But it is useless trying to delineate him. I, at least, cannot do justice to one of the noblest and most Christlike men I have known. Nothing is so hard as to credit the fact that he is away ; life, and the world, and the Church, are strangely empty without him. This is our comfort in our affliction, that his joy is fulfilled in the presence of that God Who was ever his Desire, his Trust, and his exceeding great Reward.



In His Minister's Room  
Reformed Presbyterian Church  
Germantown.

## Reminiscences by Rev. P. Carmichael, B.D.

*"Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart."*  
— Wordsworth.

A MASTER of holy thought and wit has passed into the eternal light ; and, just as he was not long in going, so he had not far to go. I never knew anyone who talked about Heaven so frequently, so familiarly, and with such detail, as Mr Struthers did ; and, if the fancy be permitted, I can imagine him saying to himself, as, having passed through the "Everlasting Doors," he looked around, "I have surely been here before."

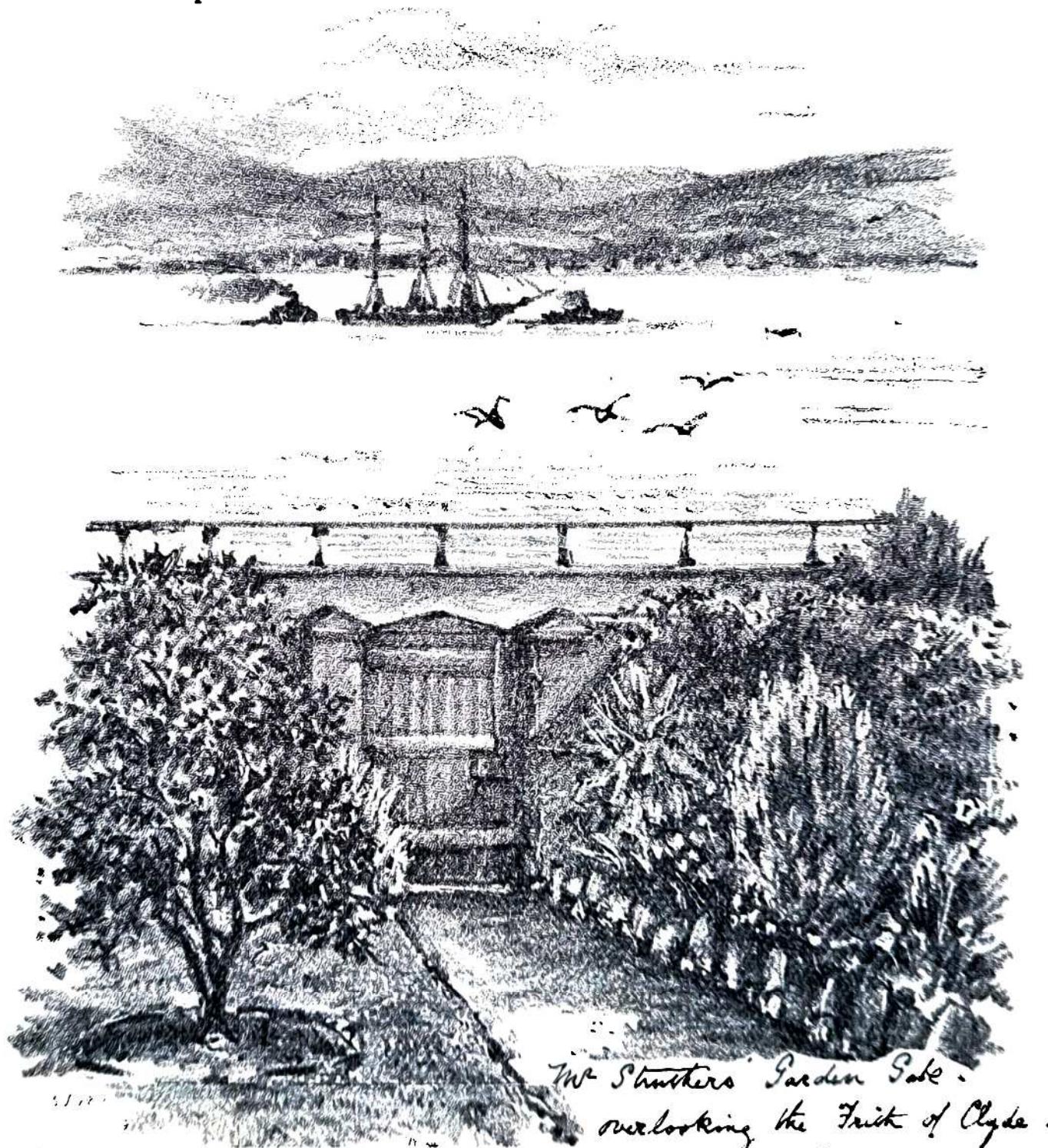
He had, of course, troops of friends drawn to him by his genius and by his heart ; but there were three in particular, about whom I know, the late Rev. John Martin of Leeds, Mr William Paterson, now also of Leeds, and myself, who sedulously cultivated his acquaintance, and were amply rewarded. He was our hero. We talked about him perpetually, quoted him, wondered at him, cherished his sayings, and were wishful to emulate his holy life.

*The Morning Watch*, with its original stories, its excerpts culled from the whole field of literature, its inimitable sketches, all of them ringing the changes on the love of God and the beauty of holiness, what a marvellous production it was in the hands of Mr and Mrs Struthers ? In a conversation I had with Dr. Denney some years ago, he told me that when *The Morning Watch* came to his study table, everything else was pushed aside until he had read it through. In mentioning to the Professor my regret that the degree of D.D., offered by his own University, had been declined by our friend, his answer was somewhat to this effect—"I should have liked well enough if he had accepted it, as I should have had the pleasure and honour of being capped on the same day as he would have been, but, after all, an ordinary D.D.—Struthers is greater than that." Surely a fine compliment from the foremost theologian of the day.

Let me put down two reminiscences :—the first with regard to his mid-week service, which was quite an institution in Greenock. Shortly after the new church was built, on a fine summer night, when prayer-meetings were more or less in abeyance over the whole land, I turned in to find the handsome building filled to the back. Whenever I was in the neighbourhood, I made for Greenock on the Wednesday night. As will be remembered, Mr Struthers expounded a chapter week by week, going straight through the Canon, book by book, chapter by chapter, not even omitting those at the beginning of 1st Chronicles, or the 10th of Nehemiah, and when he was done with Revelation, he went back to Genesis, and repeated the process. One night, a few years ago, he asked me to read the chapter that came in course, viz: the 5th chapter of 2nd Kings, containing the story of the little maid from the land of Israel—and say anything I liked about it. The reading over, I astonished himself and the people by telling them that I had been present many years before in the old church on the Wednesday on which he had expounded that very chapter in a previous excursion through the Bible, and that, under the inspiration of the address I then listened to, I had prepared a children's sermon, of which I gave the headings, not failing to mention, what Mr Struthers had emphasised, how a child's faith had “bowed the heavens.” Our late friend would have called it a “coincidence.” How Greenock will miss “Struthers' prayer-meeting !”

All who have seen him in the pulpit will bear witness to the solemnity with which he conducted the service, and the earnestness with which he prayed, and preached, and pled with men. My second reminiscence goes far to explain this. What I am about to unfold I got, certainly not from him, but from his mother. When his theological course was finished, he did not immediately apply for licence to preach the Gospel. People wondered at the somewhat lengthened delay. In my impatience I approached his mother on the subject, and one day when I was in her house (for she was very kind to me) and no one else was present, I asked why John was not sending in his name to the Presbytery. After a short pause

as if she were not sure whether she should say it or not, she whispered in my ear, "*He's waiting for the Call.*" Great and sacred words! A touch of the divine in them! *O si sic omnes!* In due time he did send in his name, which meant that the "Call" had come, at what hour, in what way we know not, but this we know, that it ushered into the Gospel ministry a man girt with the golden girdle of a tremendous assurance; that it summoned a soldier to the field who had "put on the whole armour of God."



Mr Struthers' Garden Park.  
overlooking the Firth of Clyde.

"It was found dead in its cage on Monday morning, the 11th of May. It was a gift from a friend fourteen years ago, so it died in a good old age. It was a very pretty bird, and had "points" that showed it came of well-bred ancestors. It was a good singer in its prime, always joining with us lustily at morning and evening family worship. But we could see it thought we sang far too few verses. A Psalm like the 119, sung to a 'repeating' tune, was the kind it would have liked.

"One could have wished to say a few farewell words to our faithful little friend, to thank it for all its cheery contentedness and comforting companionship. In its first week with me it thrust its head one day between two wires, and was rescued when almost at its last gasp, but never once afterwards did it give us a moment's anxiety.

"Twice seven years it served, 'yet had it no wages for the service that it served,' and it died on one of the loveliest mornings of the year, when the dandelions in our garden—a savoury food that its soul loved—were coming to their best. Yet I doubt not God gave it many happy dreams by night and delightful imaginings at times by day. Creatures that sing so constantly cannot be unhappy. He Who made them must have continual access to their minds when they are well, and He will not fail them at the end.

"In his poem, 'Consider the Ravens,' George Macdonald says :

But next I see, in my endeavour,  
That birds here do not live for ever ;  
That cold or hunger, sickness or age,  
Finishes their earthly stage ;  
The rook drops without a stroke,  
And never gives another croak ;  
Birds lie here, and birds lie there,  
With little feathers all astare ;  
And in Thy Own sermon, Thou  
That the sparrow falls dost allow.  
It shall not cause me any alarm,  
For neither so comes the bird to harm,  
Seeing our Father, Thou hast said,  
Is by the sparrow's dying bed :  
Therefore it is a blessed place,  
And the sparrow in high grace.

"Yes," adds Mr Struthers, "little birds must have many great glad hours, but perhaps the greatest and gladdest of all is the hour when God comes to say good-bye to them. If He stands by the sparrow's dying bed, we may be sure He is not there for nothing!"

## About The Morning Watch, by Annie L. Struthers.

*Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you  
the fear of the Lord.—Ps. 34, 11.*

If we except the Bible, Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and the *Scots Worthies*, there were no story books in my husband's early home. In that home the Sabbath was kept with all the strictness of the Covenanters. Never a cup nor plate was washed. After church hours the family took off their good clothes and spent the evening reading devotional books. I fancy Boston's *Fourfold State* was not infrequently the boy's portion. There came a day, however, when a friendly neighbour introduced into the home the little monthly missionary magazine for children of the United Presbyterian Church. A copy of it lies before me in its faded pink paper cover—1863 (but there were earlier numbers than that). It does not look very attractive compared with the children's books of to-day, but it brought great joy with it! There were stories in it; and an occasional illustration, one of which he never forgot, although it occupied only about three square inches of space. It was entitled "A Prairie Fire." From the distance smoke and flame were rolling up, and in the foreground men on horseback and animals were galloping for dear life. Here was something that promised to be intensely interesting, but, alas! four or five lines sufficed for the story, and the rest was an exhortation to flee from the wrath to come. All very good, but to a child disappointing.

Even at that early period he had a thought, a wish, to write a little book for children, crammed full of stories and pictures, and that wish ever grew stronger until it was fulfilled in the writing of the *Morning Watch*. He always had the idea that children, even in infancy, understand far more than we think—that God's Spirit, we do not know how, reveals things to them. His mother had told him this incident of his childhood: When little more than a baby he was one evening playing on the floor and his father was reading aloud the first chapter of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, in which Christian pleads

with his friends and neighbours to join him in leaving the City of Destruction and to set out for the Celestial City. The child fell asleep and was laid down in an adjoining room, but awakening shortly and hearing his father's voice through the open door still reading, he shouted out with great eagerness, "*Did* the man get any one to go with him ? "

He always urged the mothers of his congregation to bring their little ones to church, no matter how young, believing God had a very special blessing in His House for both. His mother had carried him thirteen times to church before he was a year old, and the little tin cup which she also took and put in a corner of the pew, out of which as he grew older, and probably more restless, he was allowed to have an occasional sip of cold water, he always kept. He was never disturbed when preaching by the noise a little child might make. On the Sabbath he was stricken down he gave out the 136 Ps., v. 13. A very little child in the church joined loudly in the singing, and not knowing just when to stop, continued on his own account at the end of each verse after the congregation had ceased. It was noticed when the minister rose to give out his text—his last text—there was a smile on his face. Believing children's minds to be so receptive, he felt bound to make things interesting to them. He would take no end of pains to teach them the right way to play a game or the method of solving a difficult question in arithmetic ; then, before the child was aware, he was praying, thanking God for His help and asking His blessing.

I have said the reading of the little U.P. magazine inspired him with the wish to write a similar one, and as years passed on the way to do so opened up quite simply. In the home where he was tutor, in an old-fashioned house in Fifeshire of happy memory, at the shooting season there was kept a book in which the contents of each day's bag of game were registered. The tutor, as well as acting beater to the shooting party, was also recorder, and filled the pages with clever accounts of the events of each day, character sketches, parodies, and songs about men, beasts, and birds ; I, being often a guest, was proud to be the illustrator. Those books make good reading still. When my husband was settled in Greenock, and found

almost at his door the firm of printers and publishers who have from the beginning so courteously helped the publication of the *Watch*, the way seemed clear. Meanwhile I had been led in rather a strange way to study lithography, so that when I was asked to do the illustrations I had just the little amount of knowledge necessary to warrant my undertaking the task. The first volume was begun in fear and trembling, and with many forebodings of an early death. It was written month by month, passing events or a new book generally providing the subjects, and almost never was there any matter in reserve. The series such as "What is thy Name?" or "Concerning Birthdays," of course, had to be planned in advance and prepared for. The Birthday Series was almost at its close. After 92 years such records are scarce, but there were still some to come. Two Sabbaths before his last, my husband had lectured in the forenoon in his ordinary course on Deut. chap. 31, in which we read : "And Moses said, I am an hundred and twenty years old this day." On the way home from church he said, "I think we must take that for our last birthday. It's a fine one." It may be interesting to some to know that in view of a new Series he had thought of two subjects. One he connected with the text, "Whose monument is this?" meaning to speak of the lives of different men ; the other text in his mind was, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." He inclined to the latter, and had already entered into his note-book many quotations bearing upon our eyes, shoulders, step, smile, shadow. I give one from Roald Amundsen's *The South Pole* : "We reckoned now that we were at the Pole. Hansen's neck grew twice as long as before" (it was misty) "in his endeavour to see a few inches farther." When they planted the Pole : "Pride and affection shone in five pairs of eyes." "Beaten, frost-bitten fists they were that grasped the Pole." This is the last entry in my husband's note-book.

Looking at a volume of the *Morning Watch*, one is constrained to quote the text, "Is it not a little one?" My husband often laughed at the candour of a young friend who once said to him : "I got quite a shock when I saw your *Morning Watch* lying on the counter of a big news shop, among all the other highly-coloured

magazines ; it looked such an anæmic little thing." And what she said was true. It is, indeed, such a "little one" that one wonders how it found its way as it did to far-off corners of the world, and at the countless expressions of gratitude received for the help and inspiration it had been. The secret was this : it carried the message of the Father's love.

I close with the words written for the first page of the first number, 1888, because they are most fitting for the last : "God is love, and that men might know that love, the love of the Persons of the Godhead for Each Other, and the love of All of Them for us, has been God's Everlasting Wish, and it should be ours. And we shall count ourselves happy if we can help anyone who may read our little paper to make God's thoughts their thoughts, and His ways their ways ; to believe that there is simply nothing God will not do for them, and nothing they may not do for Him, if only they seek the glory of His Son, standing with their loins girt and their lamps burning, patient, brave, and cheerful, looking for the Lord."

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"**T**HEN I heard in my dream that all the bells in the city rang for joy, and that it was said unto them, "Enter ye into the joy of your Lord." I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

"Now, just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and, behold, the city shone like the sun, the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal."

"And after that they shut up the gates ; which when I had seen I wished myself among them."—*Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress*.

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*O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?  
The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law.  
But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our  
Lord Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. 15, 55, 56, 57.*